





EDELWEISS

SPIRITISM

BY
EDELWEISS

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SPIRITISM.

CHAPTER I.

MY FIRST THOUGHTS ON TABLE-TURNING AND SPIRITISM.

IN my youth a novel amusement was introduced into Sweden called table-turning. In answer to my inquiries as to what this might be I was told that it was something new and remarkable which had been first discovered in America, where it had created a great sensation, had then been brought to England, France, and Germany, and finally gained a footing in Sweden.

I next asked why it was called "table-turning." I was then told that when several people were seated round a table forming a chain by holding each other's hands, and

- allowing them to rest on it, the table after a longer or shorter interval began to move of itself.

“Is it to be wondered at,” I asked, “that a table should move when so many hands are pushing it?”

But then I was told that before the chain was formed, each person promised that he would not push the table in the least, or in any way attempt to move it from its place.

“If all faithfully kept their promise,” I replied, “the table would certainly remain where it was.”

That this was not the case, I was assured. On the contrary, when a circle had been formed round the table of perfectly reliable persons, their hands resting on it so lightly as hardly to touch it, the table, in spite of every one conscientiously keeping their promise, would begin to move of itself, to creak, turn, sway gently backwards and forwards along the floor, and finally very often dance about at a rapid pace.

My answer to this assertion was that I

must have *proofs* in order to be convinced and that it would interest me greatly to be present at an experiment like the one described.

Accordingly a suitable table was chosen, around which we formed a circle, I feeling perfectly sure beforehand, that nothing extraordinary would happen. I was right that time and on several successive occasions when I, together with others, attempted to make tables, keys, or hats, "dance."

It seemed to me simply impossible, that inanimate objects would be endowed with a life and volition of their own.

Once I asked what was supposed to cause independent motion in inanimate objects.

Great was my amazement when I was told that the table was not believed to move of itself, but was supposed to be under the control of spirits. This appeared to me incredible, for surely we should be able to see them. Besides, how could they possibly pass through locked doors and closed windows? No, this was altogether too preposterous!

Soon after this occurred I heard my par-

ents speaking about table-turning, etc. My mother asked my father what his ideas were on the subject. My father, an eminent man of science, replied that in his opinion, the great sensation excited by the phenomena to which we alluded, had been much exaggerated, as no doubt such phenomena could in themselves be easily and naturally explained ; people however were fond of exaggeration, and frequently let their imagination get the upper hand, so that what was in itself perfectly natural, often assumed supernatural proportions.

For instance, if an ignorant crowd were to see a long, thick beam in lively motion, without any, to them, visible cause, they would easily think it was bewitched and that some supernatural agency was at work, whereas the explanation was perfectly simple.

All that was required was to insert into one end of a beam placed on two trestles, a fine glass tube, of which about five inches protruded, and then, with a violin bow, play continuously on the tube. At first a slight vibration would be perceptible, and this

gradually increasing, would at last give the whole beam the appearance of dancing and jumping about.

With regard to table-turning, my father thought it probable that a similar almost imperceptible vibration might arise, communicating itself from hand to hand, partly from the gradual increase of muscular fatigue, partly from the excitement which the people forming the circle would experience during a period of longer or shorter waiting. As soon as the vibration had once arisen, it would go on increasing imperceptibly, until the table at last would spin round the room with ever increasing velocity.

I remember even now what a lively impression this explanation made upon me. From that time table-turning lost all interest in my eyes.



The next time that my curiosity was

aroused on this subject was during a visit to England ; where a celebrated “medium” was creating a great sensation.

My mother had been invited to attend a seance at a friend’s house. This friend was deeply interested in the spiritistic movement. My mother related to me afterwards what had occurred during the evening.

The company were assembled in a partially darkened room. The seance commenced with a prayer for protection against evil spirits. After waiting a little time, slight creakings and knockings were audible, the “initiated” understood by the latter, that four candles were to be lighted. This, and a few more equally uninteresting trivialities, was all that happened that night, except that a promise was given that the spirits would return another time.

Besides, Henry IV. and Louis XIV. promised to come and relate some interesting things the following evening.

On hearing my mother’s account, a strong feeling of repulsion to spiritism came over

me. It seemed to me that if spirits could appear to mankind, they ought to use this power for a higher purpose than merely to talk about the most trivial things, or to relate stories which were evidently more of an amusing than instructive nature. I seriously doubted the possibility of such an unprofitable and paltry connection existing between the spiritual world and our own.

Surely, I thought, if God actually permitted such an intercourse, it would only be in order to give mankind an opportunity of receiving communications of the most sacred and spiritual nature.

Once more I lost all interest in so-called spiritism.



Several years afterwards I was in Sweden and chanced to meet in society a person who was an ardent spiritist.

No new experience had caused me to

change my opinion on a subject which I still considered so utterly trivial, and I continued to wonder how one could regard as supernatural what to me seemed so worthless. Happening, however, to fall into conversation with the spiritist above mentioned, I asked him to explain to me what it was he actually believed in.

Then for the first time I heard that in order to facilitate communication with the spiritual world a so-called "planchette" had been invented. He explained its functions to me and told me that he frequently received very striking answers to questions he had addressed to it. I begged for an example and he went on to tell me that he lived in the country, and was in the habit of consulting the psychograph on all sorts of every day matters.

To give you an instance he said: a few weeks ago when I was at home a cow was to be slaughtered. We rather wanted to wait a week longer, but feared that a thaw might set in. We wished therefore to have our doubts settled, and accordingly consulted the psy-

chograph: "slaughter the cow," was the answer, "it will thaw in a week." And so it did! Does not this prove the inestimable value of the psychograph and the truth of spiritism? All this made a very painful impression upon me. The psychograph had certainly prophesied right, but could it be possible that voices from the other side of the grave, would let themselves be heard merely in order to answer questions of purely earthly import?

Once more so-called spiritism seemed to me too petty to awaken any responsive chords.



Several years now passed without my hearing anything further about spiritism, then, however, I got to know a little more about the subject from a person who was very dear to me, and for whom I entertained the greatest reverence. During a sojourn in London he had become warmly interested in spiritism, having been present at several remarkable

seances, one of which seemed to have been particularly wonderful. My friend related to me how he had met at the house of a Mrs. —, a general's wife, a select circle of spiritists. When these persons, for whom he felt unbounded confidence, had assembled, the usual chain was formed. Daniel Home, the renowned medium, was present on this occasion. Suddenly a loud rapping was heard right up in the cornice, and light, rapid knocks. There was such a commotion that everybody heard it distinctly, and wondered if something very interesting was not going to happen. Very soon some gentle raps were heard in the table. Those who understood their significance, explained that the spirits wished all the lights to be put out, and the window opened a little, just a little, so that a present to Daniel (Home) might be brought in. The surprise of the company can be easily imagined. This request was complied with, and after an interval of anxious waiting, my friend said, a sort of exultant sound like contented childish laughter was heard around the walls

and cornices, accompanied by a joyous knocking, whilst the table rapped out in the usual spiritist fashion the following sentence: "Mrs. — has got a present which is intended for Daniel." "No, no," she exclaimed, "I haven't anything!"

A continued rapping indicated, however, that the present was lying in her lap. Mrs. — then tried to feel with her hands, as the room was still dark, but in vain; she could find nothing but a bead which must have dropt from the trimming of her dress.

"Light the candles and look!" was next rapped out.

When the lights were lit, it was discovered that what Mrs. — had believed to be a black glass bead proved to be a remarkably beautiful oriental pearl. The sensation which this created can be easily imagined! "What shall I do with it?" Home asked. "You shall put it in a cage," was the answer rapped out.

No one understood what was meant by this, till it struck my friend, that as the pearl

was of such unusual beauty, it was perhaps considered a pity to bore a hole in it, and therefore it was to be enclosed in a delicate network of gold to which a pin could be attached, so as to make it fit for use.

When he had suggested this, he assured me that a sort of exultant noise was audible all round the room, which proceeded in his opinion from invisible spirits, who were rejoicing that their meaning had been rightly interpreted.

Of course I did not for a moment doubt that my friend, whose integrity was above suspicion, had related everything exactly as it had happened, but any true conviction his account failed to awaken in me. I told him with a smile that I had long wished to possess a beautiful pearl necklace, and now if I could become a spiritist, a splendid opportunity might offer itself to gratifying my desire. At this he gently shook his fine, venerable head, and with a kindly smile answered: "You don't understand this subject yet, my child, and it is not easy either to explain

or to understand; but if you had seen and heard what I have, you would have been differently impressed. The gift of the pearl was simply a phenomenon which took place in order to show us how the spiritual world can rule the material, and use it in its service. This is a visible result, which I regard as *nothing* compared to the spiritual results which I have seen produced through the power of spiritism. Your time has not yet come, my beloved child, but if I understand you rightly, I foresee that the day will come, when your mind will be sufficiently matured to enable you to understand the higher revelations from the spiritual world and their deep significance."

I then asked my friend if spiritism had in any way been a blessing to him, and he told me that through it, light had been thrown upon questions which hitherto had appeared to him simply inexplicable. He had never been *able* to understand the doctrine of the *Trinity*; he had doubted the divinity of Christ,

and the revelation of the Holy Spirit had been to him an unsolved enigma.

“Well,” I said, “has spiritism converted you? Are you now a believer in the divinity of Christ, and no longer a Unitarian?”

“Yes,” he answered, “thanks to the enlightenment I have received from good and holy spirits, I now believe in Christ as being the only begotten Son of God, though revealed on earth as the Son of man. I believe, therefore, in His *divinity*, I believe in his own word and assurance, and if spiritism had brought me no other blessing than this belief, it would be sufficient to convince me of its inestimable value.”

“My beloved and revered friend,” I answered, “it seems to me so strange that through raps and drawings, often badly executed (for he had shown me such done by mediums), you should have become convinced of what the Bible tells us in such very plain words. Spiritism is not a *necessity* to me. When *we* believe in the Bible, we get all the knowledge in spiritual matters that is

needful." "My child," he replied, "it is a great blessing to have such entire faith, and although I feel sure that it suffices for you, still it would not surprise me if the day should come, when you will appreciate the blessing of being able to hold intercourse with, and receive instruction from, the invisible spirits who are ever around us."

I did not understand what he meant, and had not in reality the slightest conception of the privileges to which his spirit had attained. Spiritism, *as I understood it*, still appeared to me either a detestible humbug, or the delusion of an excited imagination.



Hitherto I had never myself had an opportunity of witnessing any of the so-called spiritist manifestations. It happened, however, that some years after the conversation above recorded, I chanced to meet a person whom I had not seen for a long time, and for

whom I entertained the highest regard, as well as the greatest admiration for his many and varied noble qualities. He was in fact one of the most gifted men among the many eminent persons it had been my good fortune to meet in the course of my life. It is easy to understand, therefore, how surprised I was to hear him say during a conversation, that he had received undeniable proofs of the truth of so-called spiritism. My amazement was so great, that I could not resist telling him how wonderful it seemed to me, that such an *intelligent* and gifted person as he was, could really believe in table-turning, spirit rapping and so on. He answered quite gravely, however : " If you had seen what I have, even *you* would believe. I cannot yet explain *how* these phenomena arise, but deny them I cannot." I entreated that we might at once try and get a table to move. It would be curious to see how far the experiment would succeed, if I were one of those who formed the chain, for a greater unbeliever than I was, it would be difficult to imagine. As my wish was kindly

complied with, a table was selected. The legs of this table ended like claws which hooked into the carpet, besides which it was so heavy that it was almost impossible for me to move it from its place, much less to get it to spin round. There were five of us who formed a chain round this table, and we all promised on our word of honor not to "cheat" or "humbug."

We were all equally interested in seeing if anything supernatural would take place. About half an hour passed without the slightest sound or motion being perceptible, and I took it for granted, that if we were to sit there till doomsday nothing would happen. Suddenly we all looked up; we had heard a peculiar creaking sound, and were convinced that one of us had involuntarily occasioned it. Great was our satisfaction, when each in turn protested, upon his honor, that he had not moved in the least, and that it must have been the table itself. My friend, who was the most experienced, declared that it was a sign that the table would soon move. I was sitting next to him, and in a little while I saw,

quite distinctly, something that looked like a breath stirring the surface of the table, as if light billows were ruffling the exterior of the mahogany. Deeply interested I asked my neighbor if he had seen anything? "Yes," he replied: "Did you see what looked like a breath flying over the table and gently ruffling the surface." "Yes," he answered again. "Upon your honor?" "Upon my honor; besides," he added, "I have seen this before; it is a sign that the table will soon move; let us be patient and wait; we can talk in the meantime."

We began conversing on different topics, but every time we mentioned the name of a certain person who was absent, the table creaked in a peculiar way which, thinking the matter over long afterwards, I thought very remarkable and significant. Very soon the table began to move in a singular fashion. It turned slowly round as if it were not touching the ground, stopped, and then moved again in a little while. After we had gone on about an hour, my friend thought we ought

to stop, as the exertion might be too much for some of us. He asked me how I had been impressed by what had happened. It was impossible for me to doubt that something very strange and unusual had taken place, but my father's explanation, many years ago, recurred to my mind. The table had certainly moved, but not, as I believed, through supernatural agency.

"Ah," replied the friend who had often solved many a deep problem for me, "what we are so ready to call 'supernatural,' we really ought only to call 'unexplained.' We do not yet possess the key to this mystery which is nevertheless an indisputable reality."

My mind, however, was not at that time sufficiently enlightened or matured, to be able to ponder deeply on these matters, and soon this new experience was quite obliterated from my memory.



Not long afterwards something occurred which I cannot help thinking was very remarkable. It happened as follows: At a large party, consisting for the greater part of young people, a psychograph had been brought out for our amusement. I had never seen one before, and was greatly surprised when, in answer to my question as to what was the use of it, I was told that when guided by two people it answered automatically the questions addressed to it.

For the benefit of those who have never seen a psychograph, I will here mention that it usually consists of a piece of wood, covered with a paper, upon which are printed all the letters of the alphabet as well as ciphers and punctuation. Above this piece of wood is a smaller one resting on a little movable support, on one side of which is a kind of needle. The psychograph is placed on a table: two people then seat themselves one on either side, each laying a hand on the movable board. The phenomenon consists in the needle, without any conscious guidance

on their part, pointing from letter to letter until words and sentences are formed.

Those who preside over the psychograph, can talk or think of anything they like, and the needle will fly just as surely from letter to letter. The best plan is for a third person to stand by, and note down, word by word, sentence by sentence, as sometimes all sorts of different questions are answered in an astonishing manner. Occasionally information is given to persons present, regarding things only known and understood by those to whom the psychograph is addressing itself. On this occasion it was some little time before anyone could think of a question. At last a lady proposed the following : " Who will illuminate St. Petersburg, the Emperor or the Nihilists ? " I must here explain that just at this time there had been much talk about a *fete* which was to be celebrated in St. Petersburg, with illuminations, and great excitement prevailed, as it was feared that serious disorders on the part of the Nihilists would take place, and that they would even

set the Russian capital on fire. This question was so painful to me that I was just on the point of protesting against it, when I saw the psychograph was already in motion. The answer was: "How can you so thoughtlessly ask such a serious question? Remember that the weal or woe of a whole nation depends upon the answer." This reply seemed to me very satisfactory, on account of the grave reproach it implied. For the moment it made a deep impression upon me.

The conversation now became general, and no one could agree about a question. All were perplexed, and at last I was asked to decide upon one.

As I looked at all the bright young faces about me, it struck me that it would interest the young people most if I were to ask which of them would be first engaged. I need hardly say that my proposal was received with acclamations! The psychograph presided over by two persons, instantly replied: "the young girl of twenty." A babel of questions now arose amongst the girls,

accompanied by exclamations of "it is not I!" "It is not I!" "I am twenty-one!" "I am twenty-three!" "I am nineteen!" And so on, and so on. At last one of them exclaimed: "It would really be too ridiculous if I were the only one who were twenty. Just think again, all of you." But in spite of thinking and reckoning the result remained the same; she was the only one who was exactly twenty years of age. The next question proposed was which of the gentlemen would be first engaged. The psychograph instantly gave the name of a person whom we will call O. N. Deeply interested, he asked "How soon!" "Before the month of May this year," the psychograph replied.—We were now in the beginning of March. There was no reason to suppose, at that time, that either one or other of these two people would get engaged, and no one, not even they themselves, ever thought of their getting engaged to each other. We therefore looked upon the whole thing as a joke.

In course of time, however, this prophecy

was recalled to my mind; for it happened that amongst all who were present on that occasion, just those two young people had become engaged to each other, and the engagement was announced on the 26th of April of the same year. Well, I thought it was *strange*, but this incident failed to convince me, nevertheless, that spirits could make themselves perceptible, or foretell future events. Very soon this new experience faded from my mind.



Several months afterwards, I chanced to meet a friend who happened to say a few words about table-turning and spirit-rapping, but such manifestations still appeared to me as incredible.

We certainly succeeded a couple of times in making a little table move, and I even heard some light raps, but took it for granted.

that the movement of the table, as well as the raps, were unconsciously caused by ourselves. He must also have casually mentioned to me the possibility of writing unconsciously, for I remember, after he had gone, my taking a pencil and holding it lightly over a sheet of paper, so as to see if I could feel any influence that would make me write without myself having an idea of what I was doing. Mechanically I drew several lines of consecutive *m's* on the paper. Whilst doing this, my thoughts were engaged on something quite different, and I remember now how vexed I was when I discovered what rubbish I had been unconsciously writing. Still I wondered a little, how it had been possible to have written those lines so *very unconsciously*. "Well!" I said to myself a little surprised, "it went just as by itself."

Significant words, which long afterwards were made plain to me! I soon forgot all about the attempt with the table, or that I had ever heard of such a thing as being able

to write under the guidance of supernatural powers.

After all these accounts and experiences, I remained just as incredulous as before. That so-called inanimate things could become animate, seemed to me *impossible*; that spirits could make themselves perceptible seemed to me also *impossible*; and yet I believed, in a vague sort of way, that angels could be near us and surround us with their love. The thought that a beloved mother could, from another sphere, watch over her child on earth, seemed to me beautiful, and not at all incredible. Neither did I ever doubt the truth of the Bible narratives, which relate how angels held communion with man, or how the prophets received inspiration from above. I regarded all these as sacred truths, but I could never believe that the spiritual world would manifest itself in such a material fashion as the spiritists talked about.

Thus, although I was firmly convinced of the veracity of the sacred writings, I nevertheless could not bring myself to attach any

importance to such manifestations as table-turning, spirit-rapping, or the ability of "mediums" to interpret spiritual suggestions by means of a psychograph. Neither could I imagine such materialization to be true as was described in the story about the pearl which was intended as a present for Home.

That I had myself seen a table move, and even heard it rap in an unmistakably *significant* fashion, did not impress me as being sufficiently convincing. Even that my own hand had mechanically drawn the most unmeaning strokes seemed to me perfectly natural, although I had certainly never before allowed it to act so very independently of my own thoughts.

The secret why I refused to attach any importance to what I had seen and heard lay simply in these few words : *I would not believe.*

And *why* not ? Because if these proofs were convincing, they would, to my mind, lower the spiritual world, which I regarded as so infinitely above our own, to the same level of earthly manifestations.

Could spirits, released from mortal clay, and free to rove in infinite space, renounce these advantages, and condescend to occupations, which even for ordinary mortals were sufficiently commonplace? No! it was impossible!

Besides which, across my mind gleamed the remembrance of theological doctrines, according to which the soul is fettered to the grave until doomsday.

I had never dared to hope that if we faithfully follow Christ, even unto the verge of the grave, we might perhaps with Him also be speedily released from its fetters, and enter into some new and spiritualized sphere of life. Death, to my idea, erected an impenetrable wall which it was impossible to overthrow, until it finally must fall at the sound of the trumpets on the last day; till then the dead slept in peace in their graves. Such was my belief.

Here ends my experience in *Spiritism*.

SPIRITISM.

SECOND CHAPTER.

SPIRITUALISM.

READER, did you ever happen, when travelling abroad, in the midst of some beautiful scenery, to come suddenly across a footpath which seemed to lead to the summit of a lovely hill, studded here and there with small chapels or sanctuaries? * The path is often bordered with beautiful foliage and fragrant flowers. You feel a longing desire to follow it, to see where it leads to; you want to know why these little sanctuaries, outwardly often so beautiful, have been erected there. What can they contain? They are so small, they don't seem as if they could be of much use, and yet seldom does a wayfarer pass by without pausing

* In Austria especially are to be found these kind of places of pilgrimage. There they are called "Kalvarienberge."

before them in silent devotion. The end of the path is hidden from view, but you feel sure that it does not end until it has led you to the top of the hill or mountain.

These tiny sanctuaries, standing at regular intervals, represent the sixteen so called "stations on the road to the Cross."

In each sanctuary there is depicted some of the bitter sufferings our Saviour endured on his road from the garden of Gethsemane, to the heights of Golgotha.

Let me tell you at once, that no one (figuratively speaking) escapes ascending that path, which leads us finally to the Golgothas which await us all.

The wayfarer who beholds this footpath even from afar off, feels a strange desire to tread it. A similar yearning often takes possession of the human soul, when first it sees the path which it believes will lead it quickest to God. Even the "Via Dolorosa" itself has a spiritual fascination of its own, for it also offers flowers, shade and places of rest. It is narrow, but it leads ever upwards,

and between each halting place of new suffering, the bold spirit obtains purer air, and a grander, more extensive view.

All that man has suffered and experienced outside this region seems comparatively insignificant. There, where *Gethsemane* commences, does he first enter upon that stage of existence, when ordinary views of life do not longer satisfy him. Commonplace people, his former friends and acquaintances, here generally draw back, saying: If you tread that laborious path, we will remain outside and rest. The poor human soul which is to be guided upwards, turns then, overpowered by agony, filled with forebodings of keenest suffering, to its friends, and pleads entreatingly: "Do not forsake me! follow me at least with your prayers!" But the friends do not understand; well intentioned though they be, they allow themselves to be weighed down by the spirit of indifference, which gradually lulls them to sleep. In the meantime the struggling, agonized soul sinks down in prayer before the first sanctuary,

which encloses a picture of the garden of Gethsemane.

Let us now imagine some one who, wishing faithfully to follow in the footsteps of Christ, is confined within the region of Gethsemane, separated from the whole world, deserted by his most devoted friends, awaiting like our Saviour the most awful trials, stunned, like Him, with anguish and suffering.

Now, is it impossible to believe that God could send down spirits to strengthen him also in the sore conflict, and to administer to him words of comfort, solace and encouragement? I do think I can affirm without hesitation, that no one can be spiritually born again; that no one can be freed from the bonds of matter, who has not, with faith and submission, traversed the short but thorny road which leads from Gethsemane to Golgotha.



Let me now resume the thread of my

narrative by saying, that some years after the occurrences described in the preceding chapter, I found myself within the region we just now called Gethsemane. In plain words, a great and crushing sorrow had befallen me, and I was separated from my nearest relatives as well as from my friends.

I was in a foreign country on account of failing health, alone, without support or comfort, feeling my strength giving way beneath a sudden trial, which under the circumstances seemed greater than I could bear. During this time my only consolation lay in the opportunity afforded me, to be of some little service to a person who was poor in addition, just as solitary and quite unprotected. He was a young student who had been thrown out into the world's busy throng. Every day he used to come for a couple of hours and seek comfort, encouragement and peace in my temporary home. I did not know that he was a so-called "medium," in fact I hardly knew what the word meant.

He was at my house the same evening

when that great trouble had befallen me. Little did he guess what was passing within me. We sat talking about all sorts of everyday subjects, whilst all the time I felt as if my heart would break. I seemed to hear a voice within me crying out in anguish: "It is too much! My sorrow is greater than I can bear!"

When the mind is deeply afflicted, the nerves are generally in a state of tension, which renders any sound or noise almost insupportable. I was just in that state and was feeling quite tortured by a sudden hammering which seemed as if it came from the story beneath, but was heard most distinctly just near the place where we were sitting. The knocking became at last so annoying that I said to my young friend: "When one feels as ill as I do now, it seems almost cruel to be disturbed in this way by such persistent noise."

He looked a little surprised, and had even a strange expression in his face when he answered: "Let us hope it will soon leave off."

But this was not the case ; on the contrary the noise increased, till at last it knocked, as it were, in a circle around us, and then I began irresistibly to realize that something strange was happening. I heard the knocking sometimes quite close to the young man, then again just opposite to him at a distance of fully three yards, now beside me, now in front of me—it was astounding ! But then all of a sudden it seemed to dawn upon me that here was something which was especially intended for *me*. Each knock seemed to quiver with some inner meaning, to be inspired with a soul !

A flash seemed to strike my brain, my heart ! Almost without hesitation I asked the young man : “ Are these spirits who are knocking like this ? ” He nodded. “ Then,” I exclaimed, “ I know who it is.” And I mentioned the name of a dear deceased friend.

“ Shall I ask ? ” he said. “ Can one ask ? ” I questioned. “ Yes,” he answered ; “ one knock means *no*, three means *yes*, and two means neither *yes* or *no*, the answer remaining

undecided." He then asked aloud : " Are you the person who was mentioned ? " Three loud, distinct knocks were audible in the floor at a good distance from where he sat. It was sufficient, for I had *felt the presence* of the person in question, and *knew* for a certainty it was he, and that he wished to speak to me. My young friend now remarked that perhaps this person wished to communicate with us in writing. This exceeded all that I could have believed possible. " Can spirits write ? " I asked. " Yes," was the answer, " through a medium." " But how can we get one ? " I asked again. " I am a medium," he replied with a smile. " But how can it be done ? " was my next question. " In this way," he answered ; " we shall put some sheets of paper upon the table, and I shall take a pencil in my hand and let it rest on the paper. If the spirit wishes to communicate with us, my hand will then be guided so that letters and words are formed, without my being conscious of it."

The experiment was made. To my sur-

prise a name was first traced on the paper, which we will call "Elsa." On another line was the following: "Be quite calm, dear child, and He who is our firm stay in all danger will shield and protect you! Yes, be sure of his protection and you will never despair!" Here the young man broke off the writing, which was extremely indistinct and said: "I don't know if this is right, but it seems intended for someone who is called Elsa, but whom I do not know." I begged him to continue, for I knew that the dear friend who was now dead and wished to communicate with me in this way had been in the habit during his lifetime to call me Elsa, whilst everybody else always called me Elizabeth. This alone would have convinced me, had any further proof been needed than the one I had already received, when *I felt* the presence of my deceased friend. The communication concluded thus:

"My dear little friend, we are with you in weal and woe. Keep our memory hallowed. We are grateful for every kind thought from

earth ; it soothes us, and heals many a wound which the heart, so often misunderstood, carried with it to the grave. The spirit freed from the body can then perceive more plainly why all this trouble happened ; he thanks God for every trial which he sent, submits himself humbly to the merciful power which in love directed and shall always direct all things. Farewell ! Your old friend prays God to protect you. Sleep in peace, my child."

You, who read this, will perhaps not be able to understand what a *living consolation* (if I may use such an expression) this message conveyed me. In the very moment of my life when I felt myself so cruelly struck down by an unexpected sorrow, and consequently quite crushed beneath the heavy blow, just in that moment, when I had entered the confines of Gethsemane, I felt myself surrounded by an invisible love and comforted by a well-known voice, which had penetrated the barrier, my reason had thought fit to erect between the temporal and spirit-

ual world. In this moment of anguish my spiritual perceptions were awakened, and I could, as it were, become aware of the presence of the messenger, which God in his mercy had sent to comfort and strengthen my spirit when it had entered the sacred precincts of deepest suffering.

In my inexperience I believed that this first station on the path of sorrow, would also be the last. I did not imagine one could survive greater agony, but already on the following evening I was brought to the next station of agony.

'We were again sitting together, when raps were heard as distinctly as on the preceding night, but they sounded more agitated, and on asking who it was, we were told it was the same friend who had come before. We asked if he wished to write, but an answer in the negative was rapped out. The knockings continued, nevertheless, and may no one doubt my word when I say that they seemed to get more and more agitated and troubled,

until at last, it appeared to me, they expressed downright anguish or dread.

Once more we asked if the spirit wished to write, and received for an answer: "Not now but later." Almost directly afterwards, a servant entered with a letter for me. With no presentiment of any new evil threatening me I opened it. By the time I had read it through, I had reached the second station on the path of crucifixion.

I will not detain my reader by describing what unendurable suffering is. Those who have not personally experienced it, would fail to understand. At any rate it is something bordering on madness or the agonies of death. At such a moment one cannot imagine that consolation is possible, at least I could not. But it was just then that I heard, close beside me, some low, distinct raps. This time they seemed pervaded with perfect calm. My young friend asked if we might receive a message. The answer was: "Yes, now we will write." And words were written, which brought strength and hope

and comfort to a bruised, broken and hopeless heart!—From that hour I became, and have ever since remained, a most convinced and steadfast *spiritualist*.



Now many a one may ask : “But what is really the difference between ‘spiritism’ and ‘spiritualism?’ Are they not the same thing?” “No,” I answer, “they are no more the same thing than the shell and the kernel.” If I may be permitted, I will now endeavor to explain as clearly as possible the difference between them.

For a long time it struck me as particularly strange, that the connection between our world and the spiritual one around us, should frequently be manifested in such violent ways, as one often hears described in reports from America, England and several other countries. Afterwards when I had become a “writing medium” myself, I begged to be spiritually in-

formed how it is that spirits who could choose so many ways of communicating with us, should sometimes prefer to make themselves perceptible by loud knockings, disturbing noises, moving of furniture, etc., etc. I received the following answer to my question : “ The loud material proofs of a connection existing between the spiritual world and earth, have long attracted the attention of mankind, and it has often been affirmed that such evidence is of a nature, rather to destroy than to strengthen man’s belief. This is, however, a wrong conception of their meaning. The Word of God is full with the most consoling proofs of the mission of spirits sent to man, to convey God’s commands, to comfort the afflicted, and to work miracles (according to our human conceptions), but all these proofs have achieved little, by reason of the blindness and indifference of man. More and more has he lost the power of understanding the great things, which he could not see with spiritual eyes. In all ages, however, there have been some who could see, and hear, and understand,

with their spiritual senses but they have been misunderstood by the many, and therefore they withheld, in silent meditation, the doctrines, for the proclaiming of which, the time had not yet come. The world remained unchanged from century to century, man drew himself away more and more from the light of the Spirit, which at last was hardly able to penetrate the countless fogs of this dark Earth. Had the fog not been so thick, there had been no need for *noise* to awaken the children to a knowledge of their danger. But the peril was too close at hand, the peril of its becoming a disgrace to acknowledge that we have a Creator to thank for our life, and a Saviour for our salvation, and then the spirits *clamored* till man *must* awaken from his fatal lethargy. Then at last was his numbed repose shaken, and over the whole world the question started to life: "Are there invisible powers around us, who prove that we are as nothing before them, and that we, who believed ourselves so strong and independent, that we are merely like frail children

in the presence of superior beings?" The growing conviction that such is the case, has called forth many other thoughts, which have formed a chain from the spark to the light.

Thank God, that the light has been revealed, if even as yet only to the few elect! But God's mercy is great, and He gladly calls those who long in earnest for the light. These He first tries, and afterwards He selects those who have stood the test.

On another occasion I wondered if it was possible, that not only God, but also His servants in the spiritual world, could hear the groans of the afflicted, the silent prayers for help, in suffering and temptation. To this question I received an answer, which I will give here:

"The human voice, which on account of its material construction, can only penetrate a short distance on earth, receives entirely new power when it issues from the heart. Then it pierces through space, overcomes all obstacles, and always reaches its destination. We have often witnessed how a cry of anguish wrung

from repentance, has penetrated far into the eternal abode of love, and there awakened echo after echo. We have seen how the servants of God have exerted all their strength, all their power, to softly whisper a word of consolation to the anguished soul, but often their effort has remained unheeded, for even words of love, have difficulty to penetrate where unbelief and darkness reign. Alas, do not many say: 'I have no need of spiritism, it does not seem to me necessary for my salvation.' A blind man might as well say: 'I have no need of light. God's mercy is enough for me as it is; I know His will, his revelations through others. I cannot certainly gain a knowledge of them myself by reading his holy words, or enjoying the beauties of nature, but I am satisfied as it is.' The poor, blind man has thus no conception of the joy of being able to *convince* himself at any moment, of the actual existence of the written word, just as little as he can imagine the delight of beholding those beauties of nature, which are so often spoken of in the Word of God, nor can

he enjoy the sight of all the glorious wonders which surround him ; in fact *see* them as actual *realities*, not only believe in them as described to him by others. It is just the same when man has received *spiritual* insight ; he can then, in a far higher degree, enjoy the greatness and goodness of God ; he can also gradually free himself from the bondage of beholding God's greatness through the eyes of others. His belief in what has been described to him becomes *certainty*. He is then also given opportunities of attaining to such wider knowledge as will allure his spirit from the temptations of various, and often very sinful desires.

“ Is not this a desirable aim ? It is certainly true that spiritism also has its perils, if you seek by means of it to gain some earthly end, or to make it a pedestal for your own littleness. These dangers can, however, be averted if you pray God to purify and strengthen your feeble nature, to turn your thoughts to noble aims, and to sustain your strength, so that you may be enabled to shun those errors,

to which you are else easily addicted, when you only live in, and for this world."

Another time the following was written, when I was again wondering why God availed himself of intermediate hands, to carry out what he only required to *will*, in order to accomplish. It seemed to me as if that marvelous, omnipotent "I will" ought to be alone sufficient to produce every required result. I could not imagine that God, the absolute Ruler, would deign to avail himself of the services of His subjects; I did not even remember that the Bible is one continued narrative, of how the servants of God have each in turn carried out His commands. But here is the explanation which I received:

"We have endeavored to prove to man, that his conceit and self-sufficiency lead him astray when he attempts to explain those things which are from above. But if on the other hand, he seeks in *faith* and *humility* to approach those sanctuaries, where he can obtain peace, if he desire peace, and happiness, if he long for lasting happiness, and

serenity of mind, if he will sacrifice his own interest, then and under such conditions alone he will be able to draw near to us and to that land of promise which shall fall to the lot of all those who follow *the chosen guides of God*.

Had not the people of Israel believed in God's message, they would never have been freed from bondage. Had they foolishly answered His chosen messengers thus: "*God is sufficient for us; you are only mortals like ourselves. If God will, He can deliver us without your help. You cannot offer us benefits, which God's mercy is not able to bestow without your interference.*" Had they said this, God, in his anger would not have permitted the deliverance for which they had so longed sighed.

Even when they did receive *His message*, in a proper spirit, He put them to the test over and over again. Had they then only never wavered in their faith, or been tempted to evil when they believed themselves forgotten by the Lord, they would have done much to hasten their deliverance, but doubts and

murmurings prolonged the time of their probation.

All ye wanderers on earth who are journeying towards the promised celestial land, do not, we pray you, reject the guides, whom God sends to point out the surest way. Reject not the council which is given you, not to murmur nor to despair, for thereby you only impede your own progress. Support the weak when they commence to waver; show them how a Christian can bear his cross without murmuring, adorning it with the flowers which earth was permitted to retain, when our dear Saviour's head was stung by the deep thorns which pierced even to His soul.

You have so infinitely much to thank God for, even when life seems most sorrowful, but egotism only beholds its own sufferings, and ingratitude turns away from the richest blessings. Pray God that you may become ennobled, thereby worthier of all the invisible proofs of love with which He surrounds you.

We spoke once of the blind who wished to continue in his blindness, but God forbid that

the selfish should also desire to remain selfish, or the thankless ungrateful.



Before I now endeavor to explain to the reader, what is usually meant by one word ; “ Spiritism,” I must appeal to his good will to try and understand me rightly, so that by the help of intuition he may meet me half way. Only upon this supposition, shall I succeed in awakening in him that reciprocity of feeling which is requisite for understanding a subject which lies quite beyond the pale of ordinary ideas. If he will only endeavor for a moment to forget all the contempt and derision, which the words “ spiritism ” often calls forth, it is possible, that, however incredulous he may be, the subject, taken from a serious and truthful point of view, may at last awaken his interest.

By Spiritism is meant a connection, or intercourse, with the spiritual world. Surely

there is no religion existing, in which, in some form or other, a belief in spirits is not to be found, just as there are few hearts which do not experience a strange sensation, when this subject happens to become the topic of serious conversation. This kind of feeling I should like to call a reciprocity of emotion, which the immortal within us experiences, when by the help of thought, or feeling, it comes in contact with the immortal which lies beyond our usual sphere of vision, or experience.

In the Christian religion the belief in the invisible world has reached its height, but of this I will not speak yet, as I wish at present to confine myself exclusively to the word spiritism, which has a wide signification.

This word contains, to speak plainly, the possibility of approaching the spiritual world in three different ways, or degrees. We Protestants profess only to believe in two states of existence in a future life ; we call them, Heaven and Hell. The Roman Catholics and Spiritists on the other hand, believe in

three states after death. Each of these can of course be divided into infinite grades, but the principle are called Heaven, Hell and Purgatory. According to the Protestants, the good spirits dwell in Heaven, the bad in Hell. After death, according to the Protestant doctrine, one is doomed to everlasting blessedness or damnation. The Catholics, on the other hand, believe that a weak, sinful human being, is not worthy of entering at once into everlasting bliss, nor that he is bad enough to be condemned by a *just* God to the torments of an everlasting Hell. They believe, therefore, that his spirit passes to a sphere, where it can be ennobled and *developed*, and at last made worthy of entering into God's glorious habitation. The difference between the Spiritualist and the Roman Catholic faith lies in this, that whereas the Spiritist believes in the celestial state, as well as in the probationary stage, he also believes in a Gehenna, a Hades, a *something*, which corresponds to what is usually termed "Hell," where a (symbolical) everlasting

furnace, purges the dross from the noble metal in the human heart. He does not believe, however, that under any circumstances the spirit is confined forever, to this region of suffering and torment. On the contrary, he believes that when the work is done, the spirit is released from the bonds of punishment and trial and in God's own appointed time is raised to the sphere, where the wicked cannot dwell, and where the higher *development* commences. Therefore, to sum up briefly, the Spiritualist believes in *three* states after death.

As the Spiritist believes, as we have just remarked, in a connection between our world and the invisible spheres around us, he also, in consequence, believes in a connection with the *highest* sphere, the *intermediate* sphere and the *lowest*. The connection with the latter I should call witchcraft or *black magic*, meaning thereby intercourse with the lowest, or evil world of spirits.

“Spiritism” should again signify intercourse with a *mixed* world of spirits, a sphere where

they are neither all good, nor all bad. This world is therefore a dangerous field for experiences, as the spiritual communications issuing from it can assume a variety of forms, alternating continually between good and bad.

But now we come to that kind of intercourse with the spiritual world, which I will give the name of *Spiritualism*. By this I allude to the connection with the highest sphere in the spiritual world, which is only permitted to the *true followers of Christ*, and through which they enjoy the fulfilment of His own promise, that He should send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit to them.

By "Comforter" should in this case be understood that power which emanates from God Himself, which sustains and strengthens in life's sorest trials, and which is at times confided to holy angels and spirits, charged by God to enlighten and protect those who are in need, and who are in a condition to receive divine grace. Christ Himself enjoyed, in the highest degree this wonderful spiritual

union with the celestial powers, and He promised His followers that after His death the Holy Spirit should also descend upon them. Had not this promise been fulfilled, would the army of martyrs ever have been formed to bring down, as it were at any cost, a portion of Heaven to earth? The heavenly seed was sown in their innocently shed blood, but earth reaped the blessed harvest, for it was only after the descent of the Holy Ghost had taken place, that man received strength to love his neighbor as himself, yea, often *more* than himself, and thereby bring to earth the precious teachings from those spheres where *love* rules omnipotent. These elect ought not perhaps to be called "saints," but missionaries from Heaven, sent to spread light and true knowledge amongst all the nations on earth.

If they had not felt the presence of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, they could not, as the prophets of old, have stood in direct communication with the heavenly powers—they *could* not then have carried out their various tasks, which all had but one aim,

namely, to draw down the Kingdom of God to earth. Christ taught them to pray: "Thy Kingdom come." The Holy Spirit bestowed upon them the power of endeavoring to realize this prayer. In Christ's day more could not be required of mankind than this: "Love God above all things, and thy neighbor as thyself." But since that time, mankind has been fortified by the gifts of the Spirit, which through the revelation of Christ alone could descend to earth; he has, in consequence, grown in strength, and learnt to understand that if the world is to become a Kingdom of God, he must not only love God above all things, but, by doing so in the *right* way, be brought to see that he must love his neighbor *more* than himself.

This is a hard saying, many will tell you. Do not believe it! It is the token that the glorifying light of the Holy Spirit has touched your heart and your brow, that the "Holy Ghost" has made manifest Christ's divine word and mission, which was to teach us by His example this heavenly precept.

Impeded and oppressed as we are by the imperfections of our earthly nature, we are as yet little able to respond to what is demanded of us. But God does not look to the weakness of our attempts, but to the fervor of our desire, and that lies within the region of our own free will.

If we now return to the word "Spiritualism," it is evident by the explanation I have endeavored to give, that every *true* Christian must be a Spiritualist, because he has intercourse with God—*the God of spirits*—by prayer. Prayer is, namely, communication between the spirit within us, and the spirit without us. Prayer to Christ is another intercourse with the highest sphere. That inexpressible yearning to draw near in thought to the spirit of some loved, lost one; to pour out the cravings of our soul to him, is also an intercourse with "the other world." The conviction that we are, according to the teachings of Scripture, surrounded by angels is one of the pillars of spiritualism. Most Christians believe thus much, but beyond this preparatory

faith, if I may so call it, they have seldom advanced. And why? Because they have not first sought after the Kingdom of God. They have not *searched* the Scriptures. They have but seldom read them *with prayer for guidance*. They have mostly only availed themselves of the light of their own limited understanding to pierce the obscurity in which the Scriptures are shrouded. Had they, on the other hand, prayed for light from God, a divine ray would have dispersed the darkness, and illumined their reason. The light of the Holy Spirit would have called forth in them the capacity of receiving and understanding the immeasurably deep, but simple truths of Scripture.

Had not the demons of pride and self glorification so often been allowed to obscure man's understanding, there never would have arisen so many dogmas, and confused interpretations of the Bible,—interpretations which have so long been the despair of the true believer. For the true believer does not believe because others force a faith upon him,

but because he feels within himself a corresponding emotion which agrees with that which is put before him.

That is the reason why Humanity must, as yet, have such an infinite variety of religions and creeds, while it is still enveloped in the dense mist of sins, and open to false doctrines, which accord with its own wretched carnal-minded faith.

For the *spirit* there is only *one* faith, but how many are there who even know that they have a spirit? At the most they feel, now and then, that they have a soul, that part of the spirit which is, so to say, intermixed with the body. Well, for the spirit, the *purely immortal* within us, there is only one religion, *one* faith, which corresponds to the one which belongs to the highest world of spirits, but is seldom revealed on earth, the faith which is the reward of the liberated, truth-seeking human spirit, and the realized bliss of the angels.

The more this hidden world reveals itself to man, the deeper is the insight he gets, and the greater the certainty which he obtains,

that beyond this dream life on earth, lies the real, actual life.

In former times prophets and prophetesses were chosen amongst the nations on earth, to prove to them, by visions, prophecies and counsels, that this world of ours is surrounded by another vastly its superior. Can this be told more plainly, than in the Second Book of Kings, 6th chapter, where it is related how Elisha, the man of God, by the gift of inspiration, warned the King of Israel of the various attacks the King of Syria intended to make upon him, or, when in the morning, Elisha's servant warned him, in the city of Dothan, that the hosts of the King of Syria, with horses and chariots, had, during the night, compassed the city round about, adding "Alas, my master, what shall we do?"

How calmly did not then the man of God answer: "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." By this he did not mean that the inhabitants of the little town could defend themselves against the mighty hosts of the warrior king.

No, he relied upon the hosts, invisible to ordinary eyes, which ever encompass us with their might, for he prayed and said: "Lord, open his eyes that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of his servant, and he *saw*, and behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."

A Swedish commentator of the Bible (Melin) has, inspired by the spirit of truth, thus interpreted this narrative: "It is an inexpressibly glorious thought, that the veil which shrouds the mortal eye can, for a while, be lifted here on earth, to enable man to get a clear view of the workings of Providence."

It is further related how Elisha (according to Melin's explanation), accompanied by the invisible guardian powers, went down with his servant from the heights of the city to the hostile bands, which encompassed it below, whilst the heavenly defenders surrounded it above. When they came to the enemy's camp, Elisha prayed that the Lord would

smite the people with blindness. This the Lord also did.

The narrative relates further, how the prophet led them afterwards into Samaria itself—that is to say, to the headquarters of their enemies the Israelites, where the King of Israel dwelt. Here he prayed the Lord again to open their eyes, which also came to pass. But now the prophet shows that he is a man of God, one verily chosen and enlightened by God, for when the King of Israel wanted to smite his enemies the prophet reminds him that they had not been captured in the usual way with the sword—they must not therefore be treated in the customary warlike fashion, but be well entertained and afterwards sent back to their master. The king followed the counsel of the man of God, and the blessing was not withheld, for the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel.

I dare not detain the reader too long by pointing out to him, how one Bible narrative after the other proves that there have been at all times elect, to whom have been revealed

the hidden ways of God for ruling and guiding His children. The "unbeliever" may smile, perhaps, at my simple faith, not only as regards what the Bible teaches, but also at what I have myself experienced many times in my life, but surely those who profess to *believe* in the Word of God ought rather to rejoice to hear, that the spiritualist has really received *proofs* that the wonderful events recorded in both the Old and New Testament have their parallel in our days, although but few are aware of this, and no one to my knowledge has yet spoken of these, in the highest sense, *spiritual* manifestations.

I must now beg to be allowed to explain, by means of two instances taken from the Holy Scriptures, the difference between a "spiritualist" and a "spiritist."

I should then wish to call King Belshazzar's "wise men," "magicians," "Chaldeans" and "soothsayers," whom he summoned to interpret the letters of fire on the wall, *spiritists*, or such who cannot always rely on assistance from the spiritual world. Although their life

depended upon it, none of them could either read or explain the writing. It had been traced by spirit-hand, but who could interpret it? A woman came to the rescue; the queen comforted her husband with these words: "There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father, light and understanding and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the King Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans and sooth-sayers; forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and showing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel: now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation."

And Daniel the man of God came, and the king spoke to him in these words: "I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee."

So the king promised him rich gifts and

great earthly advantages, if he would fulfil the king's wish, and interpret the writing.

But though the "spiritualist" Daniel would not receive rewards and distinctions for the gifts God had blessed him with, he still complied to the king's request.

What was denied to the others to see, he saw; and those fatal words: "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin," he could not only read but interpret.

Belshazzar must have felt that a man of God stood before him, a man to be honored above all others, for, in spite of the dreadful message he brought the king, he distinguished him, the prisoner Daniel, as if he were one of the first in the realm.

But Daniel knew from whence he had received this knowledge, both on this occasion and a former one when he had interpreted King Nebuchadnezzar's dream, for of himself he declared (Daniel, chap. ii., verse 30): "But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make

known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart."



Here is another illustration, taken from the Old Testament, which shows the difference between "Spiritism" and "Spiritualism." I refer this time to the witch of Endor, so often mentioned with dread, and who is unjustly, as I think, called the "witch," for, by witch, one means generally a wicked being, and this woman, on the contrary, showed a most kindly disposition of heart towards poor despairing king Saul, and is not the tree to be known by its fruit?

Let me first remind you of the story in a few words. King Saul had, from the heights of Gilboa, seen the hosts of the Philistines which were ready to attack him and subdue the country. His heart trembled at the sight, for the threatened danger was over-

whelming. Saul, who had so often forgotten his Lord and master, now inquires of the Lord what he had better do, but receives no answer, "either through dreams or through Urim* or the prophets."

In his despair he then begged to be told where he could find a fortune-teller, or a woman who had familiar spirit!

He was told that there was such a one close to Endor. Saul went to her at night, disguised, and implored her thus: "I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee." The woman was frightened and answered: "Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and wizards out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?" But Saul

* Questions were answered through Urim and Thummim—so it is said—in the following manner. The High Priest put on his sacred robe, on the breast of which was fastened, what was believed to be a cut crystal, called Urim and Thummim. The inquirer looked into the crystal, and if God was gracious to him, he could read the answer in the stone.

assured her, that no harm should come to her. By this promise her fears were allayed and she asked whose spirit she should bring up. He begged her to call forth the spirit of Samuel, which must have appeared immediately afterwards and revealed to her who Saul really was, for she cried out at once: "Why hast thou deceived me? For *thou art Saul.*" Here I must beg to copy, word for word, the Rev. Melin's comment on what took place, in consequence of Samuel's appearing to the woman. He says, namely: "She saw his ghost rising up from Sheol or the kingdom of the dead. The older interpretation of a spectral form, in which Satan had disguised himself, and in Samuel's shape and speech, talked with Saul, is as little to be commended as more modern ones, that the whole was an artful fraud on the part of the woman. Saul himself saw nothing, and what the woman saw and heard, she saw and heard in a state of magnetic clairvoyance or somnambulism, without the least conscious intention of deceiving. The Bible narrative is

moreover so vivid and intelligible, that even the most incredulous interpreters of the Scriptures have been *obliged* to acknowledge its historic truth, and all the more, as it has its counterpart in later times."

I will now resume the narrative by calling to mind that King Saul endeavored once more to calm the frightened woman, beseeching her to tell him what she saw. She then told him that she saw "gods," or according to the Rev. Melin's explanation, "spirits," ascending out of the earth. The king asked again: "What form is he of?" She described "an old man, covered with a prophet's mantle."*

* I cannot resist relating here, something very similar to what has just been described, which has happened to myself. The young "medium," I have mentioned before, described to me once in Paris, during a trance, how he saw a spirit who looked at me most lovingly. He described him as being an old man, with a gray beard, not exactly good looking but with such an infinitely loving expression, and eyes that seemed to shine like stars, and he added: "he wears a broad leather girdle round the waist; it is very curious!" This spirit I used to call from the earliest communications he gave me the "beloved spirit," for none could compare with him in lovingness.

Five years later I visited a lady in the south of Austria, a Countess Von V., well known in spiritistic circles for her mediumship. One evening, when she was in a trance, she described to me, in almost the same words as the young man in Paris (whom she had never heard me mention) the same spirit, for whom I had such great love

More was not needed, for Saul, by that strange feeling before mentioned, which responds within us to *truth*, knew for certain that it was the spirit of Samuel. In this conviction he bowed himself to the ground, thus showing his veneration for the great spirit, who had answered his call.

Samuel now reproaches Saul that he had disturbed him. Saul excuses himself in the following touching words, "I am sore distressed, for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets nor by

and veneration. She described his wonderfully *loving expression*, his gray beard, his whole appearance, and mentioned, lastly also with an expression of surprise, "he wears a leather girdle round his waist."

What these two medium in two different places had seen and described to me, each separately and after a long interval of time, may I think be considered a modern counterpart to what the so-called witch of Endor described. Perhaps the most remarkable thing is that she and they had been allowed to see in spirit one of the greatest prophets. The woman of Endor saw Samuel, Countess Von. V. as well as the "medium" saw the prophet Elias.

I had *felt intuitively*, (though not quite without cause) that this "beloved spirit" who protected me and had shown himself at two different times, was Elias, but I was not quite certain until a year after this last occasion, when I read II. Kings. i. 8, Elias thus described, "He was a hairy man and had a leather girdle about his loins."

dreams ; therefore I have called thee that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do."

From this it is plain that a "medium," or as she is called here, a witch (seer), was necessary to put the living in communication with him who was dead according to earthly interpretation.

Samuel speaks now and reminds Saul, that the Lord is no longer with him, but that now it has come to pass as the prophet foretold when he was alive. The kingdom has passed out of his hands, and been given to David. Because Saul has not obeyed the voice of the Lord, the Lord shall also give the people of Israel into the hands of the Philistines. Finally Samuel foretells that Saul as well as his sons "will be with him." On the following day, they will have departed this life.

When Saul hears these dreadful words, he falls fainting to the ground.

It is then that the woman, by speaking loving words to him, proves whose child of the spirit she is. She reminds him now that by having called forth the spirit of Samuel at

his desire she has risked her life, and all that she asks as a reward, for what she has done for Saul is that "he shall hearken to the voice of his handmaid," and let her put before him "a morsel of bread" that he may eat and be strengthened. After much persuasion on the part of the woman as well as of his servants, he at last consents. Then she kills the fatted calf, thus offering him the best she has at her disposal.

Let no one therefore speak of "the woman of Endor" as being bad, or a "witch!" She was only a *spiritistic medium* not a *spiritualistic*, for in that case she would have been called a prophetess and treated with veneration. Saul on the other hand is the erring one. He ought not to have sought her aid, to compel an answer from above, which had been denied him by the men of God and the prophets.

The answer he received, though in itself most awful, did not, however, contain more dreadful prophecies than others which the prophets afterwards gave to the kings both of Israel and Judah.

In contrast to the culpability of Saul in forcing himself to an answer, I will now point out a case where it was not only permissible but meritorious, to seek aid and counsel from one of God's chosen inspired seers.

It was, namely, when King Josiah was informed, that during the repairs of the Temple at Jerusalem, the Book of the Law, "which the Lord had given unto Moses," * had been found hidden in the money chest. When the king now heard the words of the Law read to him, he was frightened. He was himself a righteous and devoted man of God, and had not only endeavored to root out idolatry from amongst the neighboring nations, but had also conscientiously commenced, when only twenty years of age, an ecclesiastical reform which lasted from the twelfth to the eighteenth year of his reign. Thus for six years he had assiduously endeavored to purify the Church, when at last by the discovery of the book of the Law, he was enabled to learn how much that Church and its followers had

* 2 Chron. xxxiv. 14.

sinned, turning more and more from the Lord's holy commandments.

What does this man then do, of whom the Scriptures say, "And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses." *

Well, in his despair that the people of Israel and Judah had "not kept the word of the Lord," and that the wrath of the Lord should be poured over them, he commands the High Priest Hilkiash to go, accompanied by the highest in the land, to the prophetess Huldah, in order to hear from her mouth, through direct inspiration, what the Lord had to announce to them. Her answer was not long in coming, it was almost similar to the one which Saul received from the woman of Endor, namely calamity and desolation should be the punishment for the sins which the priests and the people had committed, but as Josiah had lived a righteous and godly life, and his heart

* II. Kings, xxiii, 25.

was moved with sorrow at the discovery of the great wickedness which prevailed in the kingdom, he should be spared the grief of witnessing the coming desolation, and be gathered to his fathers beforehand. And so it also came to pass.

I have wished by these two narratives from the Bible to illustrate the difference between a justifiable wish to know God's will and receive counsel through one of His elect, and an unjustifiable craving to search out the hidden mysteries of His will. In the one instance it is Saul, who after his request to be enlightened by one of God's chosen, and after having been denied this, seeks *nevertheless* to attain a knowledge which was refused to him. He then still persists and turns to a common medium, who probably for money made use of her gifts as a profession. The difference between these two is this, that whereas the one never employs her gift except in the service of God, and never without being entirely devoted to Him, as far as it is possible to be in this imperfect world, the other one often leans to both sides,

and serves God and Mammon alternately. They are both mediums, but the one is a *spiritualist*, the other a *spiritist*.

With regard to the third class of mediums, I will merely say, that no doubt there exists an intercourse with the wicked spiritual world; it is therefore all the more important that one should know what it consists in, and it is truly fortunate that from several pulpits in Sweden, warnings have lately gone forth reminding us that we are surrounded by "evil influences," "evil spirits," who want to lure man to destruction. Those who lend a willing ear to the voices of these spirits, those who fly to them for help, who *wish* to avail themselves of their power and influence, will certainly get what they covet.

All which comes to the petitioner through this source, however either to his own advantage or for the destruction of others, I should call witchcraft, or *unjustifiable, sinful spiritism*.

Sometimes even noble and high-minded persons can be tempted by these false voices,

which often adopt a dangerous, fascinating language, resembling even that of justice.

As an example I will mention here an occurrence, for the truth of which I can vouch. It was related by the person himself, who, according to my idea, was tempted to an unjust *thought*, for action I cannot call it, although it led to an awful result.

This person was a prominent member of the society for the protection of animals, and had nobly sacrificed six years of his life, in laboring without intermission to counteract that kind of torturing of animals, which is perpetrated in the name of science and called vivisection.

This eminent man of science was very "mediumistic," and therefore also susceptible to the "evil influences" which are continually around us.

One day he was thinking of all the dreadful suffering to which the poor defenceless animals are exposed. He thought of the frightful abuse of power, which in cold blood, and with easy conscience and stony hearts, man,

on the plea of instruction, is guilty of towards them. He became suddenly seized with a feeling of deepest horror; among all the thousand vivisectors, the image of Claude Bernard the renowned physiologist seemed to stand out most vividly before him. It appeared almost as it were dripping with the blood so mercilessly shed, and surrounded by innumerable eyes expressive of the most indescribable suffering. Contempt, hatred, blazed up in his heart, a kind of frenzy took possession of him and entirely beside himself, he hurled a curse at the one who had so sinned and bid him die! One can hardly realize the dismay this person felt, when he heard later on that Claude Bernard had actually died the same hour, when his opponent had so ardently wished him out of this world.

Could one not almost feel inclined to believe in this case, that evil spirits had hastened with joy to carry out the sentence of death. But what a heavy responsibility for the one, who in a moment of ungovernable fury had been tempted to curse his brother!

Our great poet, Tegner has, in "Frithiof's Saga" has given expression to the idea, that man in critical moments is tempted by evil spirits, as well as warned and fortified by good ones. The two birds who sing into Frithiof's ears, as he is watching over his rival king Ring, during his sleep, are typical of these invisible conflicting powers.

But how often is not this conflict, between good and evil influences, repeated in our every day life! If man could only depict to himself the exultation which arises in the two opposite camps, when he either yields to, or withstands temptations such as envy, conceit, harsh judgment, misunderstanding, calumny, deception, avarice, and—last but not least—sensuality. These are the demons of every-day life, but behind them are others which tempt to greater and greater sins. Well would it be if he could understand in its deepest significance the words "Thousands of invisible witnesses compass us round about." And more desirable still, if he understood that amongst these are innumerable good and

blessed spirits and angels, who at the least prayer for help, are willing to protect us, and banish all evil from us. Here some one may remark "But I only seek *God's* protection." But surely these are *His* servants they bring you *His* protection ! For the present, what I have now tried to explain with regard to the *three* different ways of holding intercourse with the spiritual world, must be sufficient. Another time I may perhaps return to the subject, but then much more fully. This first little work can only serve as a short introduction to a fuller treatment of a very vast subject.

Probably there are many amongst my readers who think : " Yes, it's all very well, but we should very much like to hear of some actual result, something wonderful, which has really happened through the intercourse with the spiritual world."

Oh, how well I can understand this ! I used to feel just the same, before I received so many proofs, that I forgot my first yearnings for them. I will therefore gladly comply with my reader's wish. Let me first say, how-

ever, that the so-called *actual proofs* are certainly very interesting, but that those proofs which in the beginning are withheld, and only obtained after long years of waiting, are far more convincing. A prediction is often followed by circumstances which seem in direct contradiction to what has been foretold. The honest spiritualist, who believes with all a child's trust, has in consequence to undergo severe trials which often reach the limit of the highest suffering. But if his intentions are of the right kind, if he has consecrated his spiritual communions by *prayer*, he must not give way to despair, for everything will be explained in its own good time. We mortals have such limited capacity for understanding and comprehending aright. We interpret in our fashion, but we often afterwards receive proofs that it was our interpretation which was at fault, and that the fulfilment of what was foretold came to pass, in quite a *different* way to what we had thought.

The first time that my wish to see a physical phenomenon was granted, I was already

warned in the morning that it would take place in the evening.

The young medium before mentioned and I were sitting chatting one evening, when he quite suddenly fell into a trance, which he took for a headache, or rather a feeling of overwhelming fatigue. He begged me to be allowed to rest for a moment on a little sofa which stood at the other end of the room. In order that no one may imagine that the young man had any conscious part in what now followed, I will explain graphically how it all occurred. We were sitting in a large square room. Along one of the walls was a sofa on which I sat. On the wall opposite to me was a large open fireplace. To the right of that stood the sofa where he was resting. On the other side of the fireplace there were two large arm-chairs which blocked his view. Behind these, farthest away in the left corner of the room, stood a large velvet table, crossways; between it and the door to the left, there was a little round table with some heavy object on it. Between this and

the velvet table there was only a very, very small space left in the form of a triangle.

The medium was still resting on the sofa, and I sat in my place occupied in drawing. After a good while had elapsed I heard a slight thumping sound, in the left corner of the room, just like the noise of a somewhat large glass object being put down, or falling upright on to a carpeted floor. I distinctly heard *the sound of glass falling in this way*. I looked up alarmed, thinking the young man had risen and perhaps knocked some table ornament down. He was lying, however, quite motionless on the sofa.

Then I thought I must have heard wrong, but no! Too distinctly to permit of doubt, I had heard what I am describing here. My eyes now sought a tall turquoise-blue Venetian glass vase, which used to stand amongst other things on the velvet table, a good bit from the edge, in order to be quite safe. To my surprise it was not there. "What has become of my blue vase?" I exclaimed, "it

can't possibly have fallen down? it stood too far from the edge of the table!"

The medium, rousing himself, said: "Perhaps the spirits have put it down on the floor." "Impossible," I answered; "surely spirits cannot move things!" "Oh, yes," he replied, "it happens sometimes!" I begged him eagerly to see what had happened, "for then," I added, "the blue vase is standing between the velvet table and the little round one, but it isn't likely, for there is no room for it there, but do, look!"

"Before doing so," answered the medium, still immovable on the sofa, "I will only call your attention to the fact that if the vase has been put down by the spirits, it will not be cracked or damaged in the least; but if on the contrary it has fallen down, it will certainly have been broken." Then he went and looked and my eyes followed his every movement. Before taking it up he said: "I can see it already on the floor," and then lifting the vase quietly up he brought it at once to me, and lo! though it was made of the thin-

nest glass and ornamented with glass flowers, there was not the least damage done to it.

After examining it carefully I went to the spot where it was found standing on the floor, and with the vase itself I measured the three-cornered space between the two tables, and saw that it was quite impossible for the vase to have fallen down without striking its length against the edges of the tables. It could only have been put down upright, and how carefully this had been done!

Let no sceptic now believe that the medium had himself quietly put down the vase. In the first place he was thoroughly honest, secondly it was through the occurrence itself, through the slight bumping sound, and the clink of the glass, that I was made aware of what had happened, while the medium never stirred from his place, and mind, the room was well lit.

A couple of months afterwards a servant broke the vase. She had but touched it lightly as it stood on another table. As the vase was a dear remembrance, I hoped that

it might be possible to mend it, and begged the servant to show me the pieces. "Ah," she said, "it can't be mended for it was just as if the vase had been ground to powder by the fall, although it fell very lightly on to the carpet."

This little incident may serve as an example of the proofs which led me to the conviction that the spiritual powers can control the physical world.

These kind of phenomenon are however so common nowadays, and their existence is so fully acknowledged, after the strictest and most persistent researches have been made by famous scientific men in different countries, that I need not detain the reader by describing a long list of them. Besides, I wish only to speak strictly of what I have myself witnessed.

Not long after what I have just described, quite a new sphere was opened out to me. It was far different from this lower one, where spirits are found who are allowed through physical phenomena to prove to the most in-

credulous, that a spiritual world exists, however much he may deny its existence, simply because he will not believe in it. Oh ! let me instead speak of the blessed influence of Spiritualism and all the good it leads to !

During all my life, it has been a subject of surprise to me to see how little moral help or spiritual guidance we receive from our fellow creatures. If we are in spiritual difficulty or distress—if we cannot see clearly before us, or judge what is the best to be done under certain hard circumstances, or which is the right course of action—how almost impossible is it not to find a friend who will guide and enlighten us ! It is certainly said that everything can be bought in this world, but one cannot buy anything so inestimable as this—a good advice at the right moment,—especially if it concerns your spiritual welfare.

And to whom should you apply ? To the servants of the different churches ? but they one and all declare, that they, *just* they, possess the only real truth. The pastors of the different Churches, who often mutually decry

each other, still agree in one thing namely in self-confidence, believing in their own infallibility, from the highest State Church, downward, to the lowest sectarian. Each would give the seeker advice according to his own ideas and doctrines; but what the one considers right, the other would regard as wrong. Besides, how many are there who really desire to do what is right in all simplicity of heart, and to do it with that self denial which Christ has so often proclaimed as indispensable?

Most people do they not by far prefer to find means of avoiding what is right, by a thousand artifices, or else those calling themselves "saints" or "enlightened true Christians" see often everything shrouded in a mantle of sin? They take from the young all their innocent joys and pleasures in life. Again, those of maturer age, they would deprive to earnest searchers the liberty of seeking and obtaining greater breadth of thought, than what they consider necessary for themselves. Even from old age too they would fain take all that charms and gladdens the mind;

yes, even children they would deprive of their greatest privilege, that of entering upon life with joyful, innocent trustfulness. They bid them feel as if they were toiling beneath an oppressive, overwhelming burden of sin, which the poor child thinks he can never be delivered from.

A person brought up with such ideas has told me how when he was only nine years old, he used to kneel down wringing his hands in despair thinking of his great sinfulness, fearing he could never escape the everlasting torments of hell.

One might be inclined to think that this child was vicious, bad--by no means! he was the most affectionate, devoted, conscientious child one can imagine; the fact was he had simply been brought up in "the true faith," and was taught from the beginning that he was doomed to everlasting damnation, if he did not in every way cling to the doctrines taught.

When the boy had grown to be a lad, and God had developed in his mind a craving for

knowledge, into what a deadly conflict was he not led, ere he could distinguish between what was truly bad, or truly good! How long it was ere he plainly saw, that it was not enough for the salvation of his soul only to cry Lord! Lord! but that it was necessary above all to prove by every action, his faith in the true Lord. He had to find out that it was not enough to look upon every innocent amusement as sinful, to put on a gloomy appearance, which only cold uncharitable thoughts can call forth, or to brand one's neighbor as "child of the devil," because he gladly accepts the good gifts of God, with a grateful, cheerful heart. No, it is certainly not by accepting these erroneous ideas as precepts, that we approach God by the shortest road. Oh, how many conflicts are not needed before we can see plainly through this terrible mist!

To whom, for instance, amongst his fellow-creatures could this young man have gone for help? At all the different Church doors where he might have chosen to knock he

would have received from the guardian but one *answer*: "You must believe all that *we* teach, or you had better go your way."

The poor despairing soul may than easily look for help in quite another quarter, but how often is he not there met by an insolent, affected, or self-complacent assertion from those who declare that "there is no God; that no immortal spirit dwells within us; that we human beings are the best and highest of everything which exists; that we have only ourselves to look up to. We are indeed our own Saviours!"

And then he stands just as *helpless* as before. He feels as if all that had been asserted were untrue, as if no help existed!

Well, my reader, what do you think he most needs at such a moment? Is it not the enlightenment which will help him to disentangle the falsehood which has become entwined with the truth?

He needs to go to some spiritually inspired person who would speak to him the language of love as well as of truth. Such a one would

say : “ Do not despair, dear one ; do not believe that your yearning for truth is inspired by your sinfulness, or that it is an abuse of your reason ! Again, do not believe that truth does not exist ; on the contrary, it is hidden everywhere. Sometimes it shines forth like a glorious flame, at other times it appears like glowing embers ; whilst in some instances again it is, as much as possible, hid by the rags of arrogance and sin. This holy flame does never reveal itself in all its fulness. It shares, as one might say, the fate of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. Well-meaning but foolish hands have sought to preserve it from being injured or profaned. They have fenced it round, so that people cannot get to it. They certainly allow people to approach it, but never to touch it. If man had only permitted what is holy to guard itself, the sacred instinct which is innate within us would assuredly have been the sanctuary’s best protection. But in order that such feelings may be called forth it is necessary that truth and holiness should appear in all their untarnished splendor.

Look around you, my son ! see with your own eyes how truth beams forth everywhere, bearing witness to a power which can pierce all darkness. There is no church, no sect, no religious community where truth does not form the corner stone. The building may be embellished afterwards, perhaps to excess, or may receive an ugly and repulsive appearance, it rests, however, on a costly foundation stone in which is immured many a precious coin, current in the Kingdom of God.

Amongst those again who deny God and His kingdom and erect pagan temples, there can also be found within their foundation stones—believe me—mixed with many false coins, some which are of the right sort. Amongst such I would reckon a righteous contempt for the everlasting voluminous talking and preaching among the so-called Christians, when it is but an empty show seldom followed by real good actions ; further, the indignation felt at seeing *love*, charity, the very essence of Christianity, so often left forgotten within the dead form which a mass

of dogma have raised, like a true sepulchre where even that which had life must die.

To this species of true coin belong also protestations against the intolerance which has arisen in the name of Christianity, as also blame pronounced at the unwillingness of the different Churches to endeavor by gentleness to remove the doubts which they themselves have by several of their teachings given rise to.

One's sense of justice revolts against such great and numerous errors! But, again, remember that, *reason*, desiring to rectify such mistakes fails, often, by seeking to rear a temple to its own honor and glory. If *God* is left out, an idolatrous temple is built, which sooner or later must be thrown down. Still, the foundation stone itself was not altogether worthless.

Another devotee longs to see man ennoble himself by trying to raise himself. He sees how much innate energy exists in the race, which is often dulled by doctrines teaching us, that "we ourselves require to do nothing

if we merely have faith." The unenlightened thus believe that they have simply to concur in that oft misquoted text. "The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin," and then piously fold their hands, and all will be well. But Christ has, by *shedding* His blood for us, given us His strength, and He has also laid upon us the bounden duty of consecrating our lives, as far as lies in our power, to a loving *service* for others while at the same time we must work incessantly at our own development and improvement.

This desire to serve mankind by heightening in each individual the feeling of *personal responsibility*, lies concealed like a valuable coin within the foundation stone, which the materialists or non-believers of the present day have laid, but upon which they have afterwards erected a temple of *Self-worship*.

In a word: despair not, thou searching spirit. Employ, on the contrary, all thy strength, all thy mind in seeking after the Kingdom of God with all thy heart, and everything else shall come to thee, even guid-

ance in the most difficult relations of life and during the most cruel sufferings.

Thus speaks one who has received spiritual help and guidance.

I will now give some few examples, which in course of years have come within my own personal experience, and for the truth of which I can vouch.

Our first little circle had of course gradually increased and through many who joined it we gained new experiences, and new overwhelming conviction. So as not to be again obliged to interrupt the flow of the narrative by assurances that everything happened as related. I will now repeat once for all that everything which I relate in this book is *absolutely true, and has occurred before my own eyes*. Besides, truth speaks its own peculiar language, and therefore I rely on being fully believed.

I will commence by narrating an incident of a particularly touching nature.

It happened one evening when there were

only three of us together. Amongst the number was one whose circumstances in life were quite unknown to us. We were somehow particularly animated and joyous that evening, as we occupied ourselves with "automatic writing." The first thing that was written was: "wait a little, just for a few moments." These words rather distressed us, as we feared that perhaps we had been in too gay a mood to receive any spiritual communication. But then the following was written.

"No harm in a little fun ; there is a time for everything. Now, however, is time to be more serious, but with a fresh, wholesome mind."

After this followed some beautiful descriptions of various spirit-worlds, as well as some good advice. Then, after a pause, the pen was suddenly guided in the medium's hand in quite a new, strange manner. It jumped high up from the paper and down again ; an attempt was made to write but unsuccessfully. All these movements were so violent, so angular—yes, almost ridiculous—that the

medium could not resist laughing and even saying: "this must be a funny kind of spirit who wants to make sport of us."

I got, on the contrary, quite a different impression; namely that it was some poor unhappy spirit, who wished to make his presence known by writing but who found great difficulty in the attempt. I mentioned this, and as my feeling about it was very strong, I begged the other two to join with me in prayer, so that in case my presentiment were right, this poor spirit might receive sufficient strength to communicate with us and tell us what he seemed anxious to divulge. After this, the movements became considerably calmer, but still it was only with the greatest difficulty that the following was written.

"I cannot get peace or calm myself, unhappy as I am. Alas, that I left the world too soon It is dark here, let this be a warning to all, not to follow my example but I know that God is good, and forgives I hear shot after shot suffer anguish

.... sometimes peace hope of it but much labor pray for me."

Then followed a name. The medium did not know it and wondered who the poor unhappy spirit could be. I, on the other hand, recognized the name, and knew that it belonged to a person who, in a moment of despair, had committed suicide.

This communication may perhaps appear very trivial to many, but let us examine it.

In the first place it bears evidence and is a proof that the dead can communicate with us for the unfortunate spirit proved his identity not only by signing his name, but also by mentioning the manner of his death. He understood, evidently, that "he left too soon." How often have not people speculated about the feelings and experiences felt by a person who committed suicide, but certainly few have imagined what is described here. "It is dark here.... let this be a warning to many, not to follow my example.... but I know God is good and forgives... I hear shot after shot

... anguish ... but sometimes peace ... hope of it ... but much labor ... pray for me."

How much may not these lines teach us! How easily can we not picture to ourselves the fearful darkness which already in itself must be a dreadful punishment to the unhappy spirit, who wished to escape the dimness of earth which had already clouded his brain. Instead of light and repose, which he probably hoped to find on the other side of the grave, he finds, instead, greater darkness and greater anguish! The disastrous shot sounds over and over again in his ears, but the remembrance of his sufferings is not weakened. Spiritual anguish is added to the past mortal suffering. It must have been dreadful to find that the anguish he had gone through on earth caused, as it were, only wounds on the surface; while now, by his own fault, they were changed into wounds which penetrated to the innermost depths of his being.

This is, indeed, a sad picture of the awakening in a future life of a poor sinful human spirit; but for minds which are able to grasp

the whole subject, it possesses luminous points so beautiful that they can only proceed from a divine source. Within this suffering heart is still to be found that divine, eternal spark, which can never be quenched, because it is composed of purest *love*. This spark flashes out its light in the warning given to all, "not to follow his example." Evidence is also given that his soul has been enlightened by the Holy Ghost, as he is enabled to feel and say that he knows: "God is good and *for-gives*"—and that his suffering cannot be *everlasting*, for he has moments of peace and hope!

He is even aware that work awaits him—much work—which, through God's grace, will raise and develop his spirit, and finally deliver him from the bonds of darkness. He teaches us, too, that we can by our prayers help and support the spirits who are still dwelling in darkness, and need strengthening through the might of our love.

These lines, read by the light of faith and understood through the gift of intuition, open

a wide field of revelation to the human mind
But the narrative gains a deeper, and if I may
so say, a more wonderfully *practical* significance, when I now add the following *fact*, that among us there was one, who, quite unknown to the others, harbored thoughts of committing suicide. He was so firmly determined to carry out this intention, that he only waited to fix the day and hour, till he should have decided upon the way and manner least painful to himself and which would also cause the least inconvenience and trouble to his relations.

If spiritualism had not led to more than this one result, of having saved him from carrying out his intention by giving this timely warning, it would indeed be enough to merit the attention of all serious minds.

This happened in Paris. As we were all in the habit of visiting the Madeleine Church in our lesiure moments, we often felt ourselves prompted whilst there—sometimes the one, sometimes the other—to pray with all our heart for the unfortunate but loving spirit,

who had begged for our prayers. But for a long time we heard nothing of him.

Then one day he came quite unexpectedly. We recognized him by the difficulty he had in writing, although it was easier for him than the first time. He only wrote these lines :

“I must tell you, how grateful I am . . . how rejoiced . . . (probably because we had prayed for him) I feel it easier now . . . Oh! if I had had a friend . . . how different life would have been ! ”

Yes, here again is a significant word, full of meaning, “if I had had a *friend* ! ”

And how many are there who have a *friend* on earth? What good might not a true, real friend do? Instead of beguiling a comrade into all sorts of sins and follies which degrade him and stifle his better and higher nature, a real friend might endeavor to direct his mind to higher and nobler aims. Well would it be indeed if “comrades,” oftener than is the case, would perceive and take to heart the weight and responsibility of the influence which the one exercises over the other!

Well would it be if they would learn to understand that the burden of responsibility does not always weigh heaviest upon the one who has fallen a sacrifice to mutual transgressions.

I will not, however, go further into a subject which is in itself sufficient to fill volumes, but conclude this narrative instead with an account of the last communication I received from the once unhappy spirit.

In order to understand this, I must mention that the first time he made himself known to us, he interspersed some words, in what he then wrote, expressing a wish that the contents of the communication should not be made known, particularly to his nearest relatives. But since I had reason to hope that he was no longer unhappy, it seemed to me desirable to obtain permission to relate this most remarkable occurrence. I begged him therefore, if possible, to give me an answer and let me know if my conjecture were correct, and if I was free to publish what had happened. To this I received the following reply :

“You may, you may! Your heart understood well what I meant. Whilst I was still confined there, whither my own fault had brought me, wished no one to know of my sufferings. But now that I have, through the mercy of God and the atoning blood of Christ, been released and allowed to enter spheres where my spirit exults in gladness—now you may tell the whole world of the sad fate which awaits the one who impatiently snaps asunder the cords of life, and does not endure in faith the sufferings of earth. Oh! if man would hearken to the inner warning voice, and not to the instigations of impatient presumption or despair! If he would only try to understand properly God’s holy word, sent to enlighten him, then the world would soon be transformed into a Kingdom of God—then would he be led into paths similar to those that are here. I am so happy now, for I *understand*. Thanks for your intercessions! they helped me. God bless you!”

This was signed by his name.

Another time when we were together, a

young man was with us who was much interested in these questions, but was almost unknown to us. We had no knowledge of his family matters, his ideas or way of life. That evening the medium, wrote the following, which seemed to us at the time very obscure but afterwards was fully explained.

The communication ran thus: " Rejoice, that you have become the means of guiding the ship out of the breakers. In the foreground a rock is visible on a loose, bad foundation, which threatens, however, to crush the ship which is hurrying full sail towards the danger. See, the rock recedes!—the ship sails onward—the storm abates.—Happiness becomes the steersman—Faith, the captain."

" Take heed! Mark! if anything offends thee, cut it off. Better a wound in the heart than in the conscience!"

As this was written in a language unknown to the young stranger, the injunction was added: " Translate immediately; the youth knows whom it concerns."

Of course we translated these lines, but

did not receive any explanation from him at the time.

Some time after this we were again assembled, when a spirit who had often revealed himself, in grand and to us particularly beneficial, communications, wrote thus :

“ My friends, the time draws nearer and nearer when I must, to a certain extent, influence your lives ; but I cannot do so ere the youth has broken his bonds and the poor fettered bird has escaped from its cage. It was impossible for me to draw nearer to you, before the past was abandoned. The wings which for a time have been clipped by a careful hand, have grown, and the poor bird can now, with recovered strength, recommence life and collect material for a new nest, where love and happiness will reign. See, the white wings had been soiled, but the heart’s blood has washed them clean again. Whate’er one does in life—tears of repentance will ever cleanse the most spotted garment and make it white again, but *the heart’s blood* purifies for the *higher life*,—it makes the wedding

garment ready. Keep yourselves prepared, and always ready to receive messages from above! God bless you all!" That evening there was one amongst us, who fancied he had been just a wee bit forgotten by the spirits during the last communications, and wondered within himself at this. Then was added :

"Do not believe yourself forgotten! No, never!—But the youth has needed us for the completion of his life's work."

The feelings of our young friend became now so intensified, that they welled over. Deeply moved he there and then confessed to us how he had been led into a great temptation, how he even had given way to it—how unhappy he had felt afterwards—how impossible it seemed to him to break the ties which he in reality abhorred; also how his attention had been drawn by the first message to the necessity of saving himself from those terrible rocks and cliffs which threatened to destroy his life's bark. After the first communication he had, so to say, stayed his

course, but how should he be able in future to avoid being further borne along by the current he had once entered, which slowly brought him towards ruin and perdition?

Gentle tappings were now heard; the medium received a new communication in which the youth was told to write a letter, and post it immediately. It would then arrive just at the right moment, and occasion the miracle which seemed to him impossible. He was most willing to follow this advice, but new difficulties arose. What could he write in order to bring about such a result? "We will write for you," the spirits promised. He then sat down and wrote just what came first into his head. When he had finished the letter he went and posted it himself. On his return he looked quite changed and said: "I don't know how it will be managed, but I feel as if an intolerable burden had been lifted from my heart." The letter—chiefly by arriving *just at the right moment*—became the means of freeing the young man without further difficulty from a most ava-

ricious and frivolous person. He could hardly realize that so great a mercy had befallen him !

It was truly touching to see his deep and heartfelt gratitude, as well as his grief and repentance at having ever succumbed to temptation.

Soon after we received the following communication :

(First of all many hearts were drawn and then was written) :

“ It is the heart which must penetrate all things. The heart is the home of blessedness on earth, it is the only abode fit to contain the divine spark ! This spark which by the mercy of God has been left in the heart of man like a star to guide him upwards, becomes, when misused, a devastating fire which nothing can quench. But true light—the consciousness of what is right—the knowledge of the loss of the treasure, may in time save, become the means of protecting at the last moment the costliest treasure of the heart—purity. *There* is the safeguard against de-

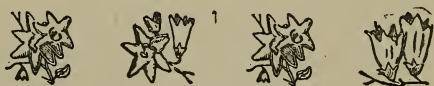
truction. God makes his presence felt again and again in order to protect what is his own. See that He does not come in vain ! Keep His habitation in readiness *pure* ! His peace be with you !

For some time, however, our young friend had to overcome many difficulties and go through many conflicts. Just when he was trying to escape from all kinds of evil influences, he was misunderstood by his nearest relatives. Troubles and annoyances ensued, so that he became ill and nervous at last ; at times it seemed as if he must succumb altogether worried by trials of every description. He was then fortunately vouchsafed a comforting message in which he was told that in a week matters would begin to improve : " for sorrow has no lasting abode in the human heart, least of all when we act in such a manner that conscience has nothing to reproach us with."

I will conclude this narrative by saying that within a week he obtained perfect peace, of mind and by using the remedies which the

spirits indicated, his nervous system was strengthened and he was restored to health. This was the reward for having faithfully followed the spiritual advice he had received.

On another occasion there was one amongst us who was deeply concerned and anxious on behalf of a beloved child who she thought was at sea in a raging storm. She, the poor mother, could not sleep that night for anxiety. But in the silence of the night she heard those dear and welcome raps, which only those can appreciate who have heard them in the bitter hour of need and suffering, and know that they indicate the presence of some invisible and beloved spirits who come to offer comfort and consolation to the afflicted heart.



When she took the pen these few words merely were written. "Be at rest, your son is not at sea, there is no cause for anxiety!"

Quietly, trustingly she could now sleep, and after some time she received news that the storm had been so terrific that the steamer had been compelled to remain in harbor and await more favorable weather.

I will now make an exception and relate something which I have not personally witnessed, but which I have still the strongest reasons for believing to be perfectly true.

A lady of high rank—from Bavaria I think—was travelling, some years ago, through Venice. She was a believing spiritist and herself a medium. One day this message was given to her: “Tend the wounded dove!”

She did not in the least understand these mysterious words, but they were repeated the following day as well as the day after. Nothing particular happened and no explanation was given during the next two days.

On the third day, she went to a reception at the house of an Italian Princess. While there she heard a lively conversation going on, interspersed with a good deal of gossip;

at last some one exclaimed: "Well, have you heard any more about the Princess who is lying ill at the hotel, abandoned by every one?" The attention of the Bavarian lady was aroused and intuitively she inquired of whom they were speaking? Ah! had she not heard the story? Princess —— had lately left her husband for love of a young and well-known statesman, who had for some time been entreating her to take this step. He loved her!—adored her!—could no longer live without her, etc. etc. etc.!

He had carried on a flirtation with her for years, had fascinated her more and more, while falling deeper and deeper in love himself (in his fashion!) and the end was that the Princess after much trouble of mind, much hesitation and scandal, had divorced from her husband, and fled with the young nobleman to Venice, where the hymeneal knot was to be tied. But after they had been there some time he changed his mind. He now not only felt that he was *able*, but he discovered also that he was quite *willing*, on account of

great personal and political interests, to live without her ! Before leaving her, he offered the once wealthy Princess a sum of money which should secure her from actual want, but she was not one to allow herself to be insulted in such a manner, by the man who had wrecked her whole life, so she refused to accept it. This did not prevent him, however, from leaving her in pecuniary distress and abandoned to despair.

Her means were soon quite exhausted. She moved from her beautiful rooms at the hotel to worse and still worse, until at last she landed in an attic. There she was lying now, forsaken by everyone and dangerously ill with brain fever, but—in the opinion of society—only enduring the punishment she had richly deserved. They had all known her in her palmy days, but—who would know her now ?

Then the words "*tend the wounded dove*" rang in the spiritualist's ears. With a heart filled with gratitude at having received such a mission, she betook herself in silence to her

suffering unknown sister. She found her on a wretched bed in an attic, delirious and almost dying, with no one to nurse her or alleviate her sufferings. But He, who watches over the smallest sparrow, as well as over each one of His children, however unworthy they may be of a Father's love, He had seen the sufferer's need, He had proclaimed to one of His servants that her help was needed. He had certainly tested her faith by the above mentioned obscure words. He had tried her heart, and found it worthy of the charge He intended for her. She arrived also just in time, first to call a doctor and then to nurse the sick woman with loving care, and by her untiring devotion she was the means of saving her life.

I was told all this at Venice shortly after the event occurred, and, as I have said before, I have every reason for believing that it happened just as I have described, more especially as I have myself experienced something similar.

I was bidden, namely, to accept an invitation

to a family whom I did not generally visit ; I was spiritually told that my presence was wanted and that I should meet there a person who needed me. This prediction was afterwards fully verified, and great blessings ensued through my having received and obeyed the summons.

I could relate many more experiences of this kind but the time has not yet come.

Some of them are of such an elevated nature and apparently so supernatural, lying as they actually do, entirely beyond the range of every-day life, that few minds are as yet sufficiently advanced to be able to hear of or assert as true, such phenomena without feeling almost confounded. One meets with many similar accounts in the Bible, but unbelievers doubt them, and the so-called believers shake their heads and say: " Ah, that was then, but such things don't happen now."

I shall therefore refrain from speaking about them at present, but perhaps at some future time I may return to these subjects when they have come into more general notice, and

people have more courage in acknowledging their own experiences in this line. In conclusion, however, I will relate one more remarkable occurrence, for the truth of which I can vouch.

In the little circle of persons who implicitly believed in the truths of spiritualism, and frequently met at my house, there was one who had become both a writing and drawing medium. This person, through a chain of unexpected circumstances, found herself for a time in great pecuniary straits, not through any fault of her own, but, as may happen to any of us, in consequence of some sudden and quite unexpected expenses. This person had a good fixed income which was paid quarterly, so that by great economy she might soon have got over this temporary embarrassment, when another expense, impossible to have foreseen occurred. The lady of whom I am speaking had only been a short time at the place where she was, and had made no arrangements for meeting difficulties of this sort which she had never anticipated. Quite

unaccustomed to such a position—timid and reserved by nature—she did not know what to do or how to manage. Her difficulties increased every day, the next quarter was not due within six weeks, what was to be done? She was choked by tears at the very thought of being obliged to speak to some friend! Besides the friends who would almost have smiled at her trouble and been able to assist her without the least inconvenience to themselves, she felt she could not address herself to, and those on the other hand to whom she might perhaps have whispered a word, they, were again in such circumstances that most likely they could not have helped her without embarrassment to themselves.



What did she do then? she turned to God and to her invisible friends; to them alone she confided her troubles. The spiritually given answer was re-assuring but seemed to her almost incomprehensible. It ran thus:

“Do not be anxious, *all will be well.*” Day after day passed—her funds diminished; soon they would be completely gone, but the answer never varied from those invisible “beloved ones;” it was always the same.

“Be calm, keep your mind easy,—it is all right, no cause for anxiety,” and more in the same strain.



Her purse at last was nearly quite empty. Still she could not bring herself to speak to any earthly friend, unused as she was to find herself in such a situation. No, those dear spirit friends were the only ones who knew of her anguish besides God, to whom she never failed to confide all joy as well as sorrow.

When no change came, the thought struck her that perhaps her invisible guides, released as they were from all earthly anxieties, had so entirely forgotten them, as to be unable to enter into the nature of trouble. “Oh, we understand very well,” they wrote, “believe in

us : you can no longer doubt, when the light of truth approaches nearer and nearer. You have not done wrong to confide in us. Only follow our advice always. Do all that we wish, just try to be calm, for all will be well. —To-morrow the solution will come of the enigmas with which we have surrounded you. That will be a proof you can depend upon, afterwards you will receive the one after the other. The time of trouble has passed. God will now give you joy, and peace in heart and soul and mind,—we rejoice at it ! ”

Later in the evening she drew some light strokes on a paper, some sort of outline—but tired and unhappy as she was, they appeared to her quite unintelligible.

The next morning she was awakened by the servant coming in and asking her to sign a receipt for a registered letter which had just arrived. Her heart beat ! could it possibly contain money ? Ah, no,—that was impossible—she did not expect money from anywhere just then. All hope vanished when

she saw that the letter came from America, where she had not a single correspondent.

She opened it, however, and found that it contained rather a large sum of money intended for her. One might call this quite a miracle—but it could be explained nevertheless, although in a very unexpected and singular fashion. Countless forgotten links had indeed formed themselves into a chain which could now, like the hidden cable under the Atlantic, convey help at the right moment from America to Europe.

Of course it can be said : “but it happened quite naturally after all!” Yes—if one considers as quite natural that sundered links should just at the *right moment* have formed a chain, and that such an event should take place just according to spiritual prediction, but quite contrary to all human probability. Of course *I* think it natural, but it would rather surprise me if those consider it so who do not believe in the active influence of the spiritual world around us. What a number of links had not been required for forming

the long chain which finally led to such a result !

The strange fulfilment of this foretold event will appear still more wonderful when I add, that the drawing which had been made the previous evening, and which had then seemed so unintelligible to our friend, proved to be on a closer inspection, and after the arrival of the letter had facilitated the discovery, a slight sketch of the map of America on the one side, and France on the other side, of the Atlantic. Across the ocean had been drawn a thin line from Paris to New York and even further on to a little spot marked in pencil, which was evidently intended to represent a small town beyond the latter city. When she had made out the sketch so far, our friend wondered if it were possible that the dot on the map drawn in this spiritistic fashion could be meant to indicate the little town, the postmark of which the letter bore. Imagine her surprise when she found, that it *lay just in the direction and at the distance from New York represented by the dot on the map !*

Now that I have come so far, my pen stops involuntarily, and I ask myself, what will the general public think of what I have written? Will the sceptic find reason to abandon his doubts? Will the scornful smile on the lips of the scoffer be changed into a more serious and thoughtful expression? Will the ignorant perceive the value of first acquiring knowledge of a subject, before expressing an opinion? Will he who believes himself to be a true Christian, but is full of prejudices, be willing to understand that others can meet with experiences which he has never been able even to imagine? And lastly, will that which I have written make any impression upon those who declare that communion with the spiritual world is a sin, forbidden in the Holy Scriptures? These latter are perhaps the most difficult to convince, for they only read, as it were, every other line in the Holy Scriptures, or only those texts which suit *their* way of thinking. They understand that Saul was wrong in consulting the woman of Endor, but do they pay any attention to the

fact that he was right when he turned for spiritual information to the men of God and the prophets, or listened to the revelations from God, which—as is distinctly stated in Scripture—were sometimes communicated to him ” in dreams or through Urim or through the prophets.” (I. Sam. xxiii. 6.)

And yet, why should I not believe that some true and earnest words can have a certain influence? I have myself doubted, denied the possibility of a connection with the spiritual world—yes, no one perhaps could have been more hard to convince than I, but when the wonderful truths came and knocked at the doors of my understanding and my heart, then they opened suddenly of themselves !

Since then a new development has commenced for me, new views have unfolded themselves—views which most assuredly have advanced me on the road which leads upwards, from earth to the realms of glory. Since then everything has appeared to me in a new and brighter light. The field of useful

action has extended and every-day life has become easier and happier. I see now my neighbor's faults with other eyes, and judge his actions with other feelings. The scales, as it were, have fallen from my eyes! Love, forbearance, compassion, have come like good spirits and chased away feelings which formerly did not appear to me so reprehensible, but were nevertheless very far from being truly Christian.

How harshly could I not then judge one who had sinned! How difficult it was then, for me to try and find excuses for one who had fallen! Now, on the contrary, there is no other feeling in my heart than one of deep and tender compassion for *all* those who like the prodigal son have strayed from their Father's home.

All the crimes, faults and shortcomings of mankind, I now ascribe to *lack of development*, which is always in proportion to the distance which man places between himself and his heavenly Father. Fortunately it depends upon his own free will to reknit the tie he has

himself sundered—also by free will to rescue the broken communion by listening to the loving voice which ever calls him back. The more he resists this ever-warning and exhorting voice, the more sinful he becomes, and in consequence he has greater need to be surrounded by the love and kindness of his fellow creatures, and above all by earnest prayers which work in silence such wondrous miracles.

After I had myself seen so many great and blessed results through communion with the spiritual world, it seemed to me almost a duty to lay before the public such evidence of spirit-communion as might in some measure help to refute many thoughtless and sometimes even presumptuous assertions, which are intended to convince people, partly that they have no immortal soul, partly that all the spiritistic phenomena recorded of late years, have been either one series of deceptions, or at the best delusion ! Finally I desire to refute the assertion which some well-intentioned persons make when

they declare that all communion with the spiritual world which surrounds us is sinful and blamable.

The exaggeration in each one of these assertions ought plainly enough to warn all thoughtful persons from giving them their full approval. But this is not always the case. It were well if this book might lead to more earnest investigations and to a greater desire to come nearer the truth with regard to such an all important subject. It were sweet indeed if I dared hope that this little work might benefit and gladden those who in this country meditate *on these topics in their hearts*, but hardly dare acknowledge even to themselves, far less to others, that something new, something wonderful, is stirring about and within them!

Ay, through the whole world goes a thrill, a feeling as if something new, something hitherto unexperienced, is approaching which makes the sensitive heart tremble for joy. May be it is something resembling what was felt when ages ago the dove returned to the

ark with the olive leaf, bearing witness that the deluge had reached its height, and that earth was rising again from out the depths of sin, embellished and glorified !

To all those who feel the approach of a new era, I would call and say : It is true—it is indeed. What the outer senses cannot perceive your spirit feels. Earthly speech and earthly feelings are insufficient to realize such celestial intuitions, but believe in the words of Christ—He says :

“I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” (John xiv. 16, 17). These words could not be better interpreted than is done by our own Swedish writer, Rev. Melin. ✓ Thus the explanation runs : “The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth which the world cannot receive because it neither perceives nor knows him, but ye know him, because he

dwells with you, and shall be in you, that is to say, you shall know him through your own *inward* experiences, for the Spirit of God bears witness to his own presence, *in* the heart of the believer, whilst on the contrary the impenitent world cannot receive Him, because it lacks faith, and has lost in consequence the power of perceiving with the heart, and being able to understand spiritually the nature and workings of the Holy Spirit."

Therefore, when to you the holy presence is revealed, when the promise is realized, do not fear! Be not afraid! Pray on the contrary that when the Lord opens your spiritual sight and perceptions, that you may not turn away from the blessing; remember these divine words:

"If any man hear my voice and *open the door*, I will come in to him."

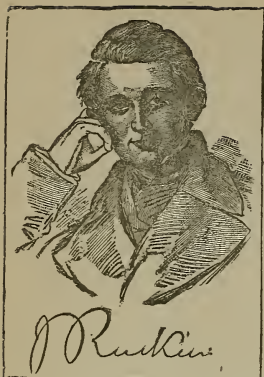
And now, dear Reader, when I am going to conclude this book, I feel it but due to myself and to you to express my deep, earnest regret at not having been able in a higher and more satisfactory way to plead the cause of so great

and lofty a subject. This time it has, however, only been my intention to throw some light on what is generally understood by the name of "spiritism." I have tried to show what comfort and consolation can be derived from sacred spiritual communion, and I have also indicated the dangers of bad or frivolous communications with spirits. But I have scarcely touched on the higher and more sublime influence which true "spiritualism" carries with it. That is a subject of such vast importance, that I should like to return to it another time, but then the reader must be prepared to follow me to the boundless, beautiful and exceedingly instructive regions of *visions* and *revelations*. Perhaps there will not be so many who care to follow me into those lofty regions, but with regard to those who do come, I may say with Thomas a Kempis: "Blessed are the ears which catch the whispers of the divine voice."



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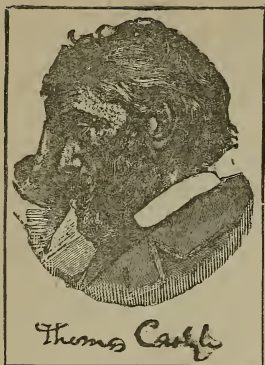
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